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A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE DEDICATION

OF THE

INDIANA STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 12, 1847.

By THOMAS B. FOX,

MINISTER OF THAT CHURCH.

Published by Request.

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WM. CROSBY AND H. P. NICHOLS,

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SERMON.

EZEKIEL XLV: 3.

AND IN IT SHALL BE THE SANCTUARY AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE.

THESE words are found in that vision of the prophet in which he foresaw the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. Describing the division then to be made of the land, he speaks of a portion to be reserved for religious purposes; "and in it," he says, "shall be the sanctuary": that is, express provision shall be made in renewed Jerusalem for the temple of Jehovah. This explanation will excuse the use I now make of the text; since we are assembled to-night, to set apart, in the city, another "most holy place."

Our churches are designed for public worship and Christian instruction. The need of these, here and now, in this community, comparatively so prosperous, intelligent and moral, is the subject to which I ask your attention; not on account of its novelty, but on account of its fitness to the occasion.

I wish to freshen the conviction, that where men most congregate, where material wealth abounds, where intellectual culture is carried to the highest point, there, for the preservation of society, for the purifying of a fountain-head from which good or bad influences stream out over the land, as well as for the salvation of individual souls, the necessity for Christian temples will continue and increase.

I would speak first of worship; of the public and habitual recognition of the presence, power and goodness of God. The tendency of things in a city, is not towards devotion. On the contrary, the danger of practical atheism is a great and besetting danger. Life in paved streets, close-packed dwellings, crowded market-places, is banishment, to no small extent, from the wonderful creation which so directly reveals the Almighty Creator. The structures men rear, shut them out from God's own temple, with its measureless dome, its mountain-altars, its forest-music, its ocean-anthems, its myriad voices and uncounted forms, — making manifest, in their beauty and grandeur, the all pervading, all controlling, all inspiring Spirit. To the hurrying multitude, the things seen and heard in a busy metropolis are not suggestive of the presence of the Supreme Being. In such a congregation of human skill and artificial fabrics, man is deified. His edifices conceal the heavens, his pavements crush every green thing: and so, standing proudly among his own works, he sees and acknowledges only his own power. To such forgetfulness of God there is a tendency; and it arises not only, as I have intimated, on account of absence from the more distinct

manifestations of God in the natural world, but also from the fact that time and thought are engrossed by objects and pursuits which appeal but feebly to the religious sentiment. The trade, the pleasures, the fashions, the competitions, the almost exclusive attention to material interests, all this, so peculiar to the dense town, is more or less unfriendly to heavenward aspirations. Notwithstanding all our temples and sacred seasons, all the longings and yearnings of the heart, which cannot by any circumstances be wholly extinguished, — notwithstanding all the sickness, sorrow, death that comes at times to force the thoughts upward in earnest supplication for the succor earth cannot give, worship, fervent and constant worship is not characteristic of the restless and thriving mart of trade. However much there may be in that mart to task intellect, encourage skill, promote taste, develope energy and enterprise, there is but little to inspire devotion. Walk through the thronged streets, go where traffic is eager almost to madness, count up the daily parades and hourly novelties, visit the abodes of refinement and luxury, seek the haunts of ignorance and vice, observe what propensities in man are stimulated to exaggerated action, and you will soon be brought to fear that were it not for our churches and our Sabbaths, worship would be a strange work and the voice of prayer a fitful, inaudible whisper. Religiousness is not the natural, spontaneous product of a city. The poet's saying, "that man made the town," is more than a morbid or peevish protest against artificial life. It has a deep meaning. The breath of devotion is stifled when

"we hear only of the actions of men, and behold nothing but what human ingenuity has completed."

Notwithstanding the rich good to be discerned in compact cities, where the highest civilization of the times displays its splendor, I am sure I am now speaking of no imaginary or distant peril, uttering no uncalled for word of caution. I stop not to argue the unspeakable importance to individual man and to society, of a living idea of the living God. The conservative, uplifting, purifying power of true worship is self-evident. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The love of God is the source of the highest, the most consistent and triumphant virtue. As man is humbly conscious that he is the child of the Infinite Father, so man gains in dignity and worth and begins to know what life is: and as communities recognize the Almighty Governor of the universe, so communities learn to do justly, to love mercy and to prefer the gain of godliness to all other gain. Certainly, then, too much cannot be done to keep alive the idea of God. Were this alone the office of our churches, it would be enough to justify all generous support, and large additions to their number; for there is occasion, even in this favored place, to cultivate the sentiment of reverence, to make more universal the spirit of worship. A tendency to atheism is to be constantly checked, a progress towards materialism to be constantly arrested, by holy days with their stillness, and holy places with their open doors, to remind men, tempted and exposed every hour to earthly-mindedness, that they are spirits, made to worship the Infinite Spirit in spirit and in

truth. I think there is no danger of exaggeration on this point. The most hopeful eulogist of the times, will not maintain that devotion is a marked characteristic — the heavenly influence, pervading, as it should pervade, the best civilization of the age. We need not inquire into the causes of this defect. We may grant that it is an evil, incident to that stage of progress through which society is now passing; that we can easily account for and partly excuse the earthward direction of human thought and desire; we may grant this, for in so doing the peril is only the more clearly exposed. In all our science, all our wealth, all that surrounds us with physical comfort and luxury, all that gives us the adornments of taste, there is little of which to be proud, little from which to derive hope for the future, if the fire on our altars is burning low; since, then, it must, in the nature of things, be that corruption is eating into the foundations of our prosperity, and sin and sensuality spreading, as fatal poison, throughout our beauty and our splendor. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Athenian skepticism, Roman brutality, Corinthian licentiousness, were not confined to one age, — have not left the earth. They are as eager to-day as ever, to conquer and corrupt any community wherein the one true God is not known and honored. And here, to say the least, here, on this spot, consecrated by the prayers of the Puritans, sought out and settled by those who thought far more of religion than of wealth, far more of piety than of ease, there is more than ordinary temptation to the too exclusive worship of wealth, which is to be

resisted, if resisted at all, by augmenting the benign influences of the Christian temple; by measuring off, as our growth continues, new portions of ground in which shall be the sanctuary.

Again, our churches are built for Christian instruction: and for this, in the city, there is evident and constant demand.

Let me here say what I mean by Christian instruction. I do not mean any theological system, any creed of a sect as such, but simply that truth revealed in the spirit, the life, the words of Jesus of Nazareth, which all believers in him substantially accept. I mean that truth which makes known our filial relation to God, our fraternal relation to man; which discloses the evil of sin, unfolds the unearthly beauty and unspeakable desirableness of virtue, declares the supremacy of our spiritual nature, and insists upon loyalty to that as the one thing needful. I mean that idea of life, with the law of duty growing out of it, which represents man as born to be an immortal seeker after truth, and goodness, and God; and regards all experience and discipline as having for their final cause, progress towards perfection. I mean that doctrine which makes the salvation of the soul, by its redemption from iniquity, the right development of all its faculties and affections, the end of existence. I mean that doctrine, in all the severity of its justice and all the tenderness of its mercy, in all the terror of its retribution and all the grace of its forgiveness, in all the solemnity of its warnings and all the encouragements of its promises, in all its wise counsels and all its rich consolations. I mean that

doctrine which is the absolute and central moral truth; which, as a fountain, nourishes the roots of virtue, and sends out refreshment to toil; which, as a sun, sheds light all abroad, resting on mountain-tops and penetrating dark valleys; which, as a friend, should nowhere be a stranger or an unwelcome guest, but rather be greeted in all places as an angel-presence; that doctrine, not as some suppose, sent only to frown on sin and sympathize with sorrow, and point to the heaven beyond the grave as the sole depository of its rewards and blessings, but designed also to cheer and elevate the dwellers on earth, to rejoice with joy, to make goodness a privilege, to teach that here and now the kingdom of God may be continually coming; that religion may be in honest work as well as in fervent prayer; smile by the fireside of home as well as be reverent at church; infuse justice, integrity, purity, peace; come as a sanctifying, cheerful, hopeful spirit into all scenes, interests, pleasures and pursuits, that are not in themselves false and evil; I mean that doctrine, in all the varieties of its statement and all the modes of its application, when I say, that for the explanation and enforcement of Christian instruction by special instrumentalities and positive institutions, there is peculiar need, in a large and growing city; and that for this specific purpose many spaces must be left among our dwellings, workshops and warehouses for the sanctuary.

This peculiar need may be argued from the exposure of man, here, to the sensualism, selfishness, and earthly-mindedness from which it is the object

of the Gospel to deliver him. I have no disposition to take other than hopeful views of society, to look on the dark side of things and forget the brighter side. And I would not now, to show the necessity for the stronger and more universal action of Christian truth, refuse to recognize the good of every kind which abounds in this metropolis. There is no occasion for such one-sidedness, there is no occasion for gloom or despondency, when we remember how gradual must be the right growth of communities, as well as the right growth of individuals. We may accept the fairest picture that can be drawn of the present, we may believe in the most glowing prophecies that can be uttered of the future, and yet speak strongly of the dangers besetting us, the pressing demand for the sanctifying presence and power of religion; because, to keep the picture what it is, and to bring on the "better time" which is coming, that presence and power are indispensable. Knowledge is here; but ignorance is here also. Virtue abounds; but sin abounds likewise. All that is bad, as well as all that is good, sends up hither its representatives. In every direction appeals, that are answered to a fearful extent, are made to the lower propensities and the worst passions; and man in his luxuries and in his deprivations is narrowed, degraded, polluted. There is no denying this. Say that the work of the Gospel is, mainly, to preach repentance and to redeem from sin; and certainly there is covetousness enough, and intemperance enough, and falsehood enough, inequality and injustice and wickedness enough, of all kinds, secret and open, everywhere present and always

present, to make this missionary ground, in which the laborers are few and the success small, compared with what are necessary to give us the right, except as it is contrasted with less favored places, to call this a Christian city. As we are growing in size, prosperity, intelligence and virtue, so also we are growing in wickedness. We are getting wealth and luxury at no small sacrifice of morals. Sin comes over our iron roads, sin is imported by our extended commerce, sin is wrought out, a hideous product, among our noblest fabrics. This is an obvious fact; and to some extent and for a time, no doubt, an unavoidable fact. But it is a fact to which I think we are not sufficiently alive. With rapid increase of population and wealth, a moral emergency has arisen for which, so intense the devotion to material interests, adequate provision has not, perhaps, been made. Needful as they are, no one imagines, for a moment, that physical force, prisons, watchmen, all the devices of selfishness and policy, all culture of the intellect even, can alone resist the inroads of vice, alone prevent the growth of moral corruption. This can be done, even progressively, only by the prevalence of true ideas of man's nature, duty and destiny; only by fixing his affections on right objects, subordinating his passions to conscience, and awakening a sense of his accountableness to God. The true regenerating and conservative force lies back of all visible restraints, all instruments of coercion and punishment, even in the unseen soul. This soul is to be reached, elevated in its aims, purified as to its motives, taught what constitutes its best privilege as well as its first duty, and so persuaded to

consecrate itself unto righteousness. I know that I am adverting here to an old truth, which no one ventures to deny, and which is reiterated day after day. But I know, also, that I am adverting to a truth which ought to be made new and living as a revelation, every hour; because, with all talk of its infinite importance, there is constant temptation to neglect its application. We take pride, a just pride it may be, in the enlargement of our boundaries, the increase of our numbers, the development of our resources, the swelling of our riches. We are continually telling to ourselves how rapidly our prosperity has advanced, and how much larger it is yet to be. An ambition to be greatest among cities seems to be possessing us: and the passion for gain, and aggrandizement through the agency of gain, is very nigh becoming a despotic passion. Surely, then, with the history of the past to instruct us, with the ruins of ancient cities whitening on the earth, with what we know of the law of cause and effect, there is neither cant nor gloom in saying, that amidst our exuberant growth there is a large and increasing amount of sensualism, selfishness and earthly-mindedness to be held in check, abated, removed, unless we would have our outward splendor become the thin, though gilded, crust of foulest corruption.

I have not the time to go, and there is no need of going, into details. All know the amount of vice and the allurements to vice which exist and work their deadly mischief on the character of the community. And as the antagonist of these, as furnishing the motives, the principles, the moral strength by

which alone they can be resisted and diminished, there must be a vigorous, earnest, ceasless inculcation of Christian truth, appealing to that which is highest and best in human nature, saving men from sordid worldliness, enervating self-indulgence, unscrupulous covetousness, and low sensuality; teaching men how, in its right use and right enjoyment, all the convenience, garniture and riches of earthly life may be made subservient to the spiritual life.

There is necessity then for continued and increased provision for Christian instruction, as a saving power. But that necessity may be urged still farther on other grounds. It is seen to be very pressing when we consider the influence of the city in forming, directing and extending public sentiment. The commercial capital is a reservoir into which is poured, and from which is transmitted, the "spirit of the times;" the centre from which opinion radiates in all directions; heart and conscience sending out, far and wide, good or evil impulses and judgments. Here, the press is intensely active, and facilities for the reception and diffusion of intelligence, thought and sentiment are almost miraculous. Messages of truth or falsehood are borne away on the wings of the wind; driven to and fro over iron roads with the swiftness of the weaver's shuttle; sent unseen and unheard, at a speed too quick for calculation, along metallic threads, stretching, as one has said, like a web-work of thrilling, sentient nerves, over the land. Not as symbols of war, but as the agents of prosperity, "the chariots," laden with the products of the mind and the passions, as well as with the products of the land, "rage

in the streets, jostle one against another in the broad ways, seem like torches, run like the lightnings." This is neither prophecy, nor rhetoric, nor poetry, but only a statement of facts. And who can think of this statement, and consider it in connection with the condition of public sentiment, without admitting what I have already said, that the city is still a missionary field for the Gospel. Concede all that can be demanded concerning the benign influence Christianity has exerted and is now exerting on the present, and how much yet remains for that influence to accomplish. Has not Christian truth still much to do to check the competitions and gambling speculations of trade; to speak of justice and mercy and humanity in the national councils, where there is such exclusive discourse of policy and expediency; to put an end to the foul enormity and egregious absurdity of war; to abolish the dark wrong and glaring incongruities of slavery; to plead for the multitudes lying in poverty, ignorance and wickedness; to promote good-will and greater equality among men? The battle-fields of Mexico; millions of human beings held, bought and sold as chattels; crowded prisons, loathsome alleys, where vice brutalizes; illuminated palaces, where dissipation corrupts youth and innocence; costly sacrifices of all that is beautiful and true and good, laid on Mammon's altars; — are not these, notwithstanding all the more numerous and better and brighter characteristics of the times, that without doubt might be described and ought never to be forgotten, are not these undeniable witnesses that the community needs still to be reasoned with of righteousness, temperance, and

judgment to come, until it trembles, — until it is persuaded to be not almost, but altogether Christian in its principles and its aims?

In this connection may we not go even farther than I have gone. Is there not reason to say, that the sentiment of the times, in some of its best directions, needs a larger infusion of Christian truth. The spirit of humanity, as with fraternal affection it goes about doing good, seeking and saving the lost, insisting upon a wide and generous application of the second great commandment, deserves all praise and heartiest sympathy. And yet, may we not fear that it is in danger of being, not too much, that is impossible, but too exclusively concerned with the outward and physical welfare of men, to the neglect of their spiritual welfare; that, nobly striving to establish the kingdom of heaven upon earth, it fails to give due attention to the fact, that the kingdom of heaven must first be established within the soul? Philanthropy, as it seems to me, may be getting too far separated from and too independent on religion and religious institutions, — rashly divorcing itself from the church. Now, I am not prepared to say this is not in a great degree the fault of the church. I am not prepared to say that the church, busy and contentious about creeds and ceremonies, has not neglected the weightier matters of the law. I am not prepared to say that the church, with its hierarchies, its divisions into warring sects, its union with the State, its avarice and ambition, has not forgotten that its Founder, when asked if he were indeed the true Messiah, pointed to his works of benevolence and said, "Go your way and

tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." I am not prepared to say that the church, as a whole, has not been and is not now too indifferent to the claims of humanity, to the beautiful and yet searching testimony of that Apostle who felt the very beatings of his Master's heart, — "and, this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also." I am not prepared to say that the church, the visible church, has not been thus faulty, though its fault can be explained and partly excused. And yet it is also true, that our philanthropy was born and nursed in the church, and instead of deserting the church should remain, helping the church to reform itself, to enlarge its sympathies and charities, obtaining from the church the piety it needs for its own purity and safety. Unless it does this, it will fail continuously and uniformly to recognize in its action man's immortality and dependence on God; cease to have the sanctions of religion; cease to believe that except as it aims ultimately at moral results, its work is comparatively low and short-sighted. From the mount of prayer Christ came down to pursue his mission of mercy. His teachings nowhere justify a separation of the two commandments which constitute the whole law; or intimate that either can be kept whilst the other is neglected. Moreover, it would not be difficult to show that in religion is to be found the chief warrant of benevolence; that man, seen from the Christian stand-point, is man claiming love and help and honor;

because from that stand-point alone are man's dignity and value to be seen and comprehended. The worth of each individual, the worth even of the vilest sinner, is taught by the Gospel as it is taught nowhere else. The doctrine of the brotherhood of man is a deduction from the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God; and philanthropy, to be wise and elevated in its action, must have piety for its source. It is by the light of Christianity, therefore, that the reformer is to carry forward his labors of love, if he would have them of the highest order, and enduring in their results. Where, then, as in the city, reform is most busy with its theories and earnest in its operations, there, to have it careful for the spiritual as well as the material well-being of men, should Christian truth be promulgated, and the charity, kindled at the altar, go forth as the holy product of communion with God.

But I will not pursue this argument farther, and need not perhaps have pursued it thus far, since the demand for Christian instruction may be presented by bare allusion to the fact, — that a city is composed of men. Man is here; man the sinner, the sufferer, the mortal and the immortal. Man is here, to solve by thought, by fearful inward and outward experiences, the problem of life. Man is here, with the perilous gift of moral freedom; with the conscience, that can so make his bosom a heaven or a hell; with affections bringing, as they are pure or perverted, such intense happiness or such indescribable misery. Man is here, with his religious nature, his ability for righteousness, his capacity to seek his Maker and Father. Man is here, to make, only for a few years, one of the crowd;

to rejoice, and toil, and suffer, whilst moving swiftly and more swiftly on to the tomb and to eternity. Man is here, born to trouble as well as to joy; in his careless childhood and buoyant youth; at the bridal; by the hearth of his home; seeking subsistence and a name; shattered by infirmities; lying motionless in his coffin; buried in his grave. Yes! man is here, to be, by the unalterable laws of the moral universe, in the way of salvation or in the way of perdition. In our statistics we speak coldly of the population as composed of a hundred thousand souls! Put the full meaning into that phrase. Take only one of those souls. Imagine all that may come into its consciousness, shape and color its career, be its life on earth and its retribution hereafter; see that soul as God has made it, and for what God has made it; then think that a hundred thousand such souls make up this city, throng these streets, inhabit these dwellings, give and receive, by incessant action and reaction, all the good or evil that here prevails; think of this, and exaggerate, if you can, the importance of Christian instruction; — or the demand for the sanctuary, as conducive to that instruction.

I have thus glanced at the relation of the church to the city, to infer from it the necessity which exists for increasing the efficiency and the number of our religious institutions, that the influence of Christianity may be made stronger and more universal. The spirit of the Gospel should pervade this community; and to that end the Gospel, by right arrangements, should be kept very close to men, in all their relations and pursuits — offered as

freely as possible. A great work is now going on for the physical, and, indirectly, for the moral good also of our citizens. From a natural reservoir, at a distance, we are constructing the costly viaduct of masonry. Our streets are broken up to bury beneath them sixty miles of iron pipe, from which almost numberless smaller tubes are branching out into our houses. This is cheerfully done at great cost; and already there is joy at what is to follow; already the day is impatiently anticipated, when an abundant supply of that pure element, so essential to comfort, health, life itself, shall flow into the city as a common blessing. There is something sublime in this grand undertaking, this union of labor, capital and science working amicably together, to bring comfort and luxury to congregated thousands of human beings. Is there not also something in it suggestive of a higher duty? Provision for an animal want, — of what avail in the end will that be if unaccompanied by equal provision for our moral wants? "The living water," — ought not that to be kept flowing freely in every direction, enter every dwelling, reach every needy soul, so that it may drink, if it will, and never thirst again? With all our growth, then, in other respects, there should be a corresponding growth in our sanctuaries and most holy places; and these, moreover, should be made various in their kind, diverse in their arrangements, so as to meet the condition and tastes of all.

I would be very careful not to exaggerate the importance of a cherished belief; but consistency requires me to express, here, the deep conviction

I entertain, in common with many others, that the time has come, when liberal Christians especially, if they would do their whole duty, put their simple views of the Gospel within the reach of those who need them, reap their share of the harvest, which increases every day, should open some churches, differing somewhat in the mode of their support from those which already exist. The world, in its secular affairs, in its very pleasures, is giving significant hints. The principle now acted upon on railroads and other conveyances for travel, at places of amusement, in our cheap literature and cheap postage, in many kinds of business, is to obtain the largest number of purchasers by a system of low prices. Why should not something analagous to this principle, potent for evil as well as good, be used directly in the service of virtue and religion? Why not make education, for the moral nature, nearly as accessible as education for the intellect?

There is nothing in the Gospel, as we understand it, which forbids changes in the modes of its administration, called for by the changes in the state of society. On the contrary, since God has in a great measure left the spread of the Gospel to the care of human contrivance and human effort, I apprehend it to be the duty of Christians to see that religious institutions keep pace with the times, and are ordered and sustained in a way to meet the wants of the times. The problem to be constantly solved is, how to bring Christianity into contact with the greatest number of souls. One solution of this problem, so far as visible means are concerned, will not work well for all ages

and in all places. In some countries, an established church, may, for a while, be the best thing that can be had. For a season, and for a portion of the community at all seasons, public worship may be most conveniently and easily supported by reference to the distinctions of property. But no single organization can exhaust our resources, or be made once for all, and universal in its fitness. It is because of the latitude and variety allowed in regard to the forms through which it may be expressed, that Christian truth can act in all climes and upon all social conditions. There is no one fixed pattern for the Christian sanctuary like that ordained for the Jewish tabernacle, since the former differs from the latter in being designed for the whole world and not for a single land and a selected nation. In view of this truth, is not a somewhat new state of things beginning to exist among ourselves; calling upon us, as I have suggested, if we would retain our place and our share of influence, to add to our religious institutions others differing somewhat in the style of their management? Excellent as the present system may on the whole and for the present be, good as are the reasons given for its continuance by a portion of the community, it certainly has defects, operates unequally, is necessarily somewhat exclusive. Why not do then what can easily be done to improve it by the introduction of new forms?

Unexpensive churches, in addition to those which wealth builds up beautiful and costly, as noble structures and fitting ornaments to the city; unexpensive churches, of our own faith too, — that faith which,

notwithstanding the honest doubts of some of its friends, I believe to be adapted to the widest spread, peculiarly fitted to attract, convert and save many to whom it has not yet been fairly offered, even here, in its dearest home; unexpensive churches, comporting with the simplicity of that Gospel which the common people heard gladly, and corresponding with our free and equal institutions; unexpensive churches, which those of moderate means, who, as facts begin to show, are at no very distant period to be mainly the inhabitants of the city proper, can easily sustain; unexpensive churches of this description, working harmoniously and without opposition in connection with other churches more richly endowed, are not these demanded at our hands, if we would act consistently with the views we profess to take of the Gospel? It seems so to me. Among the whole body of believers, I know of no denomination more bound to seek, by liberal expenditure and wise economy, the spread of Christianity. If there is any truth in what I have said of the necessity for public worship and Christian instruction; if we believe that pulpits, our pulpits, occupied by ministers making no claims to superior wisdom or worth, but moved by their own sense of duty and the choice of their fellows to be servants of the people for Christ's sake, and do what may be given them to do in Christ's cause; if we believe that such pulpits, from which the living voice shall address those to whom the cares of business, constant toil, the hurry, excitements, pleasures of a city life leave little leisure, offer few inducements for study and thought of those things which concern their highest welfare;

if we believe that such pulpits, not the sole agents, but important, among the many agents God employs, to diffuse moral and religious truth are wanted, wanted now and here, — then surely they ought to be multiplied, and bring within the sphere of their action all classes and conditions of men; otherwise, it will remain to be shown with what sincerity and strength of conviction we hold to the belief, that our conception of Christianity approaches more nearly than any other the Christianity of Christ.

This edifice, to the extent circumstances permitted, is a partial, approximate attempt to realize some of the views I have expressed. To the success of our work it is important that our plan and position should be distinctly understood, — for much remains to be accomplished; and were it not for the hope of farther sympathy and aid, for cöoperation on the part of those who think, with us, that measures ought to be taken to have some of our churches moderate in cost and equal in the arrangements for their support, — were it not for this hope, we should hardly have persevered to this hour, or ventured upon the services of this occasion. There is no large congregation now waiting to become the regular occupants of these pews; they are designed to gather a society rather than to accommodate one already formed. Few in numbers, we have left the chapel which has been so kindly loaned us as a place of worship, with the belief that with a convenient church, exclusively for our own use, we can more fairly try, and more completely execute, our cherished purpose. Our judgment in this respect has been sanctioned by those whose opinions

are entitled to higher regard than our own. And it is now my pleasant duty to acknowledge the assistance by which we have been so generously encouraged and strengthened; and to say, that this sanctuary stands here, in its simple beauty, the result, in part, of loans and donations made by those in and out of the society, who readily answered the appeal in behalf of a church of this description. It stands here, I am also bound to add, owing in no small degree to the disinterested perseverance of the builder, who has done his work very much as a labor of love, and not for personal gain. May he, and all other friends, find their reward in the consciousness that they have been permitted to contribute towards a Christian work, which shall, according to its ability, be a blessing to this community, when the places that now know them shall know them no more. How far the plan has been well conceived, whether we occupy, as we think we do, ground hitherto vacant, or nearly so, and shall be sustained as those making a useful addition to the Christian institutions of this city, the future must of course determine. Meantime, with trust and hope that shall rise above solicitude and fear, we have come to the solemn consecration.

And now may the prayers which have ascended for the first time from this new altar, be answered, and this house consecrated, henceforth, a Christian sanctuary. Reverently we dedicate it to the Infinite Creator, the Ruler, the Protector, the Father of all. Here may thankful hearts praise His goodness. Here may contrite hearts seek His mercy. Here may sorrowing hearts obtain His consolation. Here may

inspiration from above descend to cheer despondency, to strengthen weakness, to shed light and peace and joy into many bosoms. We dedicate this house to the One God, to whom alone supreme homage belongs, to whom alone supreme homage should be rendered. We dedicate this house to God, in whom we live and move and have our being; to the known God, — known by the revelations of His works, His providence and His word, as the living and ever present God, the God of all power and might, the God of all goodness and love. We dedicate it humbly to Him who asks not for burnt-offerings and costly sacrifices; to Him, who, as he marshals the shining hosts above, and listens to archangel choirs, watches also the sparrow's fall, hears the sigh of his poorest child on earth, — is not far from every one of us. "God, that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Yet, as His spirit pervades the universe, so from Sabbath to Sabbath, as His children gather under its roof, may His presence fill this house, His blessing rest upon it, to keep it a most holy place, until its walls return to the dust.

We dedicate this church to the truth as it is in Jesus, — the uncorrupted Gospel of Christ. In its own simplicity and its own power, with its own simple and significant rites, may that Gospel be here received; that Gospel, the day-spring from on high, glad tidings to all people, giving glory to God, promoting peace on earth and good-will toward men; that Gospel, renewing the heart, inviting the prodigal to come to himself, and go to his Father, — comforting those who

mourn, guiding those who rejoice, conquering death, bringing immortality to light, profitable for the life that now is, full of promise of the life that is to come; may that Gospel, with its united lessons of piety and humanity, its messages of truth, holiness, liberty and love, be the Gospel taught here as the standard which men should strive to reach, the law of duty men should labor to keep, the spirit of devotion and charity with which men should ask to be inspired.

And, by whomsoever prayer shall be made, praises sung, the word of truth spoken, — in however much of weakness or imperfection, — may He whose power knows no limits, whose mercy cannot be exhausted, overrule and bless the services that shall from time to time be offered; so that this Christian sanctuary shall become to many souls a portal to that "temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

I. VOLUNTARY.

II. PRAYER.

BY REV. F. D. HUNTINGTON.

III. SELECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE.

BY REV. E. PEABODY.

IV. CHANT.

V. DEDICATORY PRAYER.

BY REV. S. K. LOTHROP.

VI. HYMN.

O Thou, whose own vast temple stands
Built over earth and sea,
Accept the walls that human hands
Have raised to worship thee.

Lord, from thine inmost glory send,
Within these courts to bide,
The peace that dwelleth without end
Securely by thy side.

May erring minds that worship here
Be taught the better way,
And they who mourn, and they who fear,
Be strengthened as they pray.

May faith grow firm, and love grow warm,
And pure devotion rise,
While round these hallowed walls the storm
Of earth-born passion dies.

VII. SERMON.

BY REV. THOMAS B. FOX.

VIII. PRAYER.

BY REV. CHARLES F. BARNARD.

IX. DOXOLOGY.

"From all that dwell below the skies," &c.

X. BENEDICTION.

NOTE.—THE INDIANA STREET CHURCH has been built for the purpose of carrying forward an experiment, which was begun in the Warren Street Chapel, viz.: the formation of a Congregational Society, by which the privileges of public worship shall be enjoyed, on equal terms and at as small an expense as may be found practicable. In this church there is no classification or sale of pews: and the seats are rented at an uniform rate. The present arrangements are as follows:

1. To those taking seats for a year, $3 the year for each seat.
2. To those taking seats for three months, $1 per quarter for each seat.
3. No seat rented for a less time than three months.
4. The payments quarterly, in advance.
5. Families and others, when it is desired, can have permanent seats assigned them.
6. Gentlemen, hiring seats, may become members of the Society, and entitled to vote, by signing the By-Laws.

For further information, inquiry may be made of any member of the Standing Committee, or of the Pastor of the Society.

Those disposed to aid in the establishment of a society of the character here briefly described, can do so by donations, or by taking shares in the church: the price of a share being fifty dollars.